

message. Senator Schmit was talking about sending the wrong message. I think this sends the message that Nebraska is not willing to defend its interest in the U.S. Supreme Court and that, in fact, we might be willing to roll over. I do not choose to send that message and I would urge you to oppose the amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Hannibal.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I rise also to oppose the amendment. Senator Scofield, I think, did an excellent job of explaining why it would be proper to oppose this amendment and, basically, she said I think about exactly what I wanted to say, except to maybe emphasize to Senator Schmit and others who might be in favor of this proposal that I think his goal is absolutely correct. I believe that the goal of trying to negotiate a settlement and try to work amicably with our surrounding states to come to some good, rational decision as to how we're going to allocate the water resources of this region is certainly, by far, the best way to go. I don't have any quarrel with that. I'm not an attorney. I'm not an expert in water. I'm not even an expert in this particular case but I do recognize what I think is kind of common sense. As Senator Scofield pointed out, if you want to negotiate, if you want to try to preserve this out of the courts, you need to have as much knowledge as you possibly can. You need to have as much legal knowledge. You need to have as much legal expertise. You need to make sure that your case is properly structured and properly detailed so that you understand what your rights are in a court of law and at the bargaining table and you understand what your positions are. And I think that two things, one, since this money is earmarked specifically for this project, it's not a matter of just throwing money at a government agency and saying, handle it. It's specifically earmarked that we don't have to worry about this money just being spent or an increase in expenditures for other things, that if it is not needed, if we do negotiate, if we do settle this amicably and rationally, these funds come right back to us. It's not an expenditure. But, too, that if we suggest that we can get by on a negotiation table with less knowledge, less expertise and less dedication to the protection of our own rights, that this would send indeed a signal of just the opposite to, if I were sitting on the other side of a negotiating table, say, well, they, obviously, don't really care that much. It's apparent to me that they don't know that much